

Episode 143 - Manaure of the Caquetios

Manaure was our legendary great chief of the South-Western Caribben and North-West main land area, what today is Venezuela. A great strategist and strong nation warrior statesman. He lived in a very large town called Todariquiba, located nearby the banks of a river by the name of Rio Mitare, in Northwestern Venezuela. This Mitare River flows through a dry Paraguana xeric scrub ecoregion*, dividing then into the Pedregal and Paraíso rivers which empties both into the gulf of Coro in the Caribbean.

Native legends mentions Manaure as an intelligent and brave person, who upon obtaining the position of Cacique, was conferred legal, magical and of spiritual convictions, he was the only one to hold such important type of chiefdom compared to what was common in those days in Europe. He was carried in special made hammock throne litters by his warrios. He was described as having an overwhelming personality, im-

peccable conduct, inordinate power of shrewd understanding and strong character. He recognized in those times as a "man of his word" because what he said he did. He wrote his name in history, as he was one of the few indigenous monarchs (caciques) in South America to negotiate with the Spanish colonization in the early 16th century. Manaure came into contact with the Spaniards around 1523 through his Vassal Caciques, who informed Juan Martín de Ampíes, who was in Aruba at the time, of the interest in peace negotiations for the mutual agreement of the two parties in the region. Thus, through his emissaries, Manaure established an alliance with Ampíes. Ampíes had to suffer in his own flesh, the sale of slaves and indigenous people among merchants from Santo Domingo. In this situation, 150 of the indigenous people and some relatives of Manaure found themselves kidnapped to be sold as slaves in 1525. Thanks to the diplomatic relations between the two parties, Ampíes managed to rescue, together with his agent, a good number of indigenous people, including all the relatives of Manaure.

Grateful, Manaure sealed the first alliance, than later Baptized by Ampíes with the name of "Martín" and thus followed by the Foundation of the City of Santa Ana de Coro in Venezuela - on July 26, 1527 in the name of the Spanish Chatolic Crown. This area has been an enormus productive trade zone long berfore old world colonization started.



But the good relations with the Spanish would soon end when King Charles the V in 1528, faced with the debts he had contracted with the German bankers, Breached his contractual agreement with Manaure and decided to cede the administration of the province to the Welser House of Augsburg, things turned sour. Augsburg who had no respect for the already existing alliance appointed a new governor a few years later, Ambrosio Alfínger, who initiated an important indigenous depopulation masacre in the province. This was also the end of all prosperity in the region.

The Germans seize canoes and all that were property of the nation and that of Manaure, who, upon claiming them, is imprisoned. While Ampíes was expelled and stripped of all his position, he would later return to Curaçao and Aruba in support of Manaures campaing. Some time later, Manaure was released and forced to leave for some (250-300 km) away from Coro, taking refuge with his family. He started a gerilla campaign against the Germans who all ready had mercenaries on his search. He was ambushed and executed one site in 1549 in one of the numerous battle against the Conquistador mercenaries, in what is now the City of El Tocuyo.

Our goal is to raise cultural awareness, promote education and safeguard our heritage as the sacred mother seed guiding you to be the next guardian of the island. If you love Aruba its origins and its cultural heritage, be part of the exclusive visitors of this cozy home-atelier called "Etnia Nativa". This private residential houses collections of native art, archaeological artifacts and historic furniture, while the facilities themselves are the result of the transformation of recycled materials. Meet the acclaimed columnist at home! Book your visit Whatsapp + 297 592 2702- or mail: etnianativa03@gmail.com



Article by: Etnia Nativa

Whatsapp us +297 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience

Etnia Nativa is close to the high rise hotels

